

Special Group

Recognition License Plate

APPLICATION GUIDE



STATE OF INDIANA
BUREAU OF MOTOR VEHICLES

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Frequently Asked Questions

Introduction

The Special Recognition License Plate program was designed to recognize groups, which have made significant civic, community, and charitable contributions in Indiana or are descendants of native or pioneer residents of Indiana under IC 9-13-2-170.

Now in its eleventh year of existence, the program has grown to more than 45 groups.

This Guidebook outlines the procedures that need to be followed when applying to participate in the Special Recognition License Plate Program.

How many license plates may be issued per year?

According to 140 IAC 2-4-1(b); The Bureau of Motor Vehicles may, in its discretion, limit the number of new special group recognition plate types authorized in any one (1) year or years to regulate the proliferation of special group recognition plate types due to the following concerns:

- (1) Proliferation of special group recognition plate types makes proper identification of vehicles by law enforcement officers and other individuals more difficult.
- (2) Proliferation weakens the distinction of special group recognition plates for deserving organizations which have previously qualified for special group status.
- (3) Proliferation adversely effects the efficient distribution of license plates through the license branch system operated by the Bureau of Motor Vehicles Commission.

Who is eligible to participate in the program?

An organization wishing to participate in the special group recognition license plate program must indicate to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles its intent to be included in the special group recognition license plate program no later than **March 31** of the calendar year immediately preceding the calendar year the special group recognition plates are to be issued.

The following requirements must be met:

- The organization or group shall be non-profit.
- The organization or group shall be based, headquartered or have a chapter in Indiana.
- The organization or group shall be non-recreational.
- The organization or group has made significant contributions to the United States, Indiana, or the groups community;
- Or are descendants of native or pioneer residents of Indiana.

Frequently Asked Questions (Continued)

How can I apply?

Your application letter must be submitted by March 31 and include the following:

- A description of the organization.
- The philosophy or mission statement of the organization.
- The length of time the organization has been in existence.
- The number of active members in the organization.
- The organization's unique significance to Indiana.
- A statement of the group's objectives in obtaining a Special Recognition License Plate. (*What do you hope to accomplish by the issuance of this plate?*)
- A sworn statement from an authorized officer of the organization which affirms that, to the best knowledge of such officer, the organization does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, religion, sex, national origin or disability in contravention of any federal, state or local law, regulation, decree or order in the selection of its members, its civic activities, or its services provided to the community it serves.
- A statement of the organization's intended use of the funds, if any, raised through the sale of the plate.
- A certified copy of the organization's charter or articles of incorporation.
- A color drawing of the preliminary license plate design.
- A statement describing the active membership of the organization who would be eligible for the special group recognition license plate.
- Documentation of not-for-profit status as evidenced by:
 - a) A determination letter from the Internal Revenue Service (letter 947 or equivalent) as to qualification for exemption from taxation under Section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code; or
 - b) A photocopy of a Not-for-Profit Tax Registration Certificate issued by the Indiana Department of Revenue or Registered Retail Merchant Certificate (displaying not-for-profit number). Written documentation or other information that the Bureau of Motor Vehicles deems necessary to determine whether the organization qualifies for special group recognition status.

Pending application approval; the following must be submitted no later than **July 31**:

- A \$6,000 Surety Bond
- A petition signed by 500 individuals who will purchase your organization's license plate.
- Such other documentation or other information that the Bureau of Motor Vehicles deems necessary to determine whether the organization qualifies for special group recognition status.

Frequently Asked Questions (Continued)

How can I apply?

A group requesting participation may be asked to prove to the satisfaction of the BMV that it is a separate, unique organization with an independently verifiable number of members, by providing to the BMV the names and addresses of all members of the group at the time of application for inclusion in the program, and at any later time, upon the written request of the BMV.

Detailed Requirements

Signed Petition

- Subsequent to petition approval by the bureau, but **no later than July 31st** of the calendar year immediately preceding the calendar year the special recognition license plates are to be issued, the organization must submit to the bureau a list of the names and addresses of all persons who have submitted applications to the organization for the group's proposed special recognition license plate.
- In the event the organization's petition is approved but the organization cannot provide the Bureau of Motor Vehicles with the list of applicants in the numbers required by the due date, the organization may request in writing, no later than thirty (30) days subsequent to the due date, a one (1) time one (1) year extension to obtain a sufficient number of applicants desiring to purchase the proposed special group recognition plate.
- If the organization fails to request an extension, or is still unable to submit a list with a sufficient number of applicants at the conclusion of the one (1) year extension, the petition originally filed by the organization will no longer be valid.
- The list submitted to the bureau must contain no less than five hundred applicants.
- **Submission of a list containing one (1) or more names of individuals who have not actually applied for the plate will be grounds for rejections of the proposed special group recognition license plate. (This personal information will not be released by the Bureau of Motor Vehicles.)**

Bond Requirements

- The organization must submit a bond issued by a surety company, a cash bond or an irrevocable letter of credit after the minimum of 500 authorizations have been issued but before the plates are ordered. The bond must be in a total amount of six thousand dollars (\$6,000) and may not be cancelled without ten (10) days prior notice to the bureau.
- In the event the new special group recognition license plates are manufactured and less than five hundred (500) such plates are sold in the first year of issuance, the bond must be conditioned for payments to the bureau according to the following formula [500 – number of plates sold x \$12.00].
- If five hundred such plates have been sold in the first year of issuance the bond will be returned to the organization.

Plate Design

Your organization is responsible for the development of the plate design. A preliminary design must be submitted at the time petition is made. The design will be reviewed for content and adherence to the plate guidelines.

A stacked alpha combination and up to four numerics is the format for a Special Recognition License Plate number. The BMV will try to accommodate specific alpha requests. However, we reserve the right to select and assign alpha combinations.

Detailed Requirements (Continued)

Group Coordinator

Once a petition has been approved, a group coordinator must be designated by your organization to oversee all aspects of the program and serve as a liaison with the Bureau of Motor Vehicles.

Their responsibilities include ensuring that all deadlines are met and established procedures are followed.

Marketing

Your group accepts **FULL RESPONSIBILITY** for the marketing of your organization's license plates.

Copies of all promotional material will be reviewed by the BMV for content and adherence to the guidelines before they are distributed.

The Bureau of Motor Vehicles will assume no responsibility for solving problems that occur as a result of the distribution of unapproved materials.

No marketing material will be displayed in Bureau of Motor Vehicles license branches, unless it is specifically sanctioned by the Bureau.

Verification of Customer Eligibility

The group is responsible for the verification of applicant eligibility based on the requirements established by your organization. This is accomplished through the issuance of **VALIDATED** authorization forms.

All authorization forms should be completed with the applicant's name, address, city and zip code. The authorization form must be issued in the name that appears on the vehicle registration.

Loss of Status

According to Indiana Code 9-18-25-15 - The bureau shall terminate an organization's qualification for the special group license plate program and no further special group recognition license plates shall be issued for an organization if less than two thousand (2,000) of the organization's special group license plates are sold or renewed in the first four (4) years of the five (5) year period beginning the earlier of January 1, 2002, or January 1 of the year in which the organization's special group license plate is first issued.

The bureau shall reevaluate the organization's qualification for the special group license plate program every five (5) years thereafter. The bureau shall terminate the organization's qualification for the special group license plate program and no further special group recognition license plates shall be issued for an organization if less than two thousand (2,000) of the organizations special group license plates are sold or renewed in the first four (4) years of a subsequent five (5) year period.

Detailed Requirements (Continued)

Loss of Status (continued)

If an organization fails to meet the BMV's requirements, qualification to participate in the special recognition license plate program shall be terminated and no further license plates shall be issued.

The failure of an organization to meet the requirements of this rule may be considered when reviewing any subsequent petitions for participation in the special recognition license plate program.

Contacts

If you have any questions or require further assistance you may contact:

Special Plates Administrator
Telephone - (317) 233-2514
Fax - (317) 233-0053

